

(Ms. SLAUGHTER asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from North Carolina for yielding me the customary 30 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I will be blunt: This is a bad bill and a bad rule. This is Congress again playing scientist, and I urge defeat of the rule and defeat of the underlying bill in its current form.

In its efforts to address the issue of human cloning, my colleague, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WELDON) has managed to duplicate the controversy arising from the administration's debate over whether to ban federally funded stem cell research.

Mr. Speaker, there is a strong consensus in Congress that the cloning of human beings should be prohibited. For many people, the prospect of human cloning raises a specter of eugenics and genetic manipulation of traits like eye color or intelligence, and none of us want to see these types of abuses. Yet H.R. 2505 and its excessive fear of science and the possibilities of scientific research attempts to deprive the American people of their hope for cures and their faith in the power of human discovery.

The Human Cloning Prohibition Act goes far beyond a ban on cloning of an individual known as reproductive cloning. This legislation actually also bans stem cell research and, finally, would prohibit the importation of products that are developed through this kind of research.

As a former scientist, I am profoundly concerned about the impact this proposal would have on our Nation's biotechnical industry. If we ban stem cell research, we risk ceding the field of medical research to other nations. Top scientists in the field are already leaving the United States due to the mere threat that this type of research may be banned.

If H.R. 2505 is passed, we must accept the fact that preeminent scientists, and, indeed, entire research facilities will move overseas, in order to pursue their studies. If we stifle our Nation's research efforts, patients will suffer as well.

This research holds the potential to treat diseases that afflict millions of Americans, including diabetes, cancer, heart disease, stroke, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, brain or spinal cord injury or multiple sclerosis. If scientists overseas were to develop a cure for cancer using stem cells from a cloned embryo, Americans would be banned from taking advantage of that cure here in the United States because we could not import it. Surely we should not deny our constituents access to life-saving cures.

Moreover, we should be prepared for the evolution of two classes of patients, those with the resources to travel abroad to receive the cure and those who are too poor and must therefore stay in the United States to grow sicker and die.

Fortunately, we have before us a balanced responsible alternative, the substitute offered by our colleagues, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GREENWOOD) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTSCH).

The House of Representatives stands today at a crossroads in our support for scientific endeavors.

Mr. Speaker, we really should not be debating this at all. None of us is equipped to do so. We simply do not know enough, and for this House to take the step that we are about to take today is unconscionable.

We must not allow our fears about research to overwhelm our hopes for curing disease. We must not isolate this Nation from the rest of the scientific world by banning therapeutic cloning.

Make no mistake, we are sailing into uncharted waters. Our decision here today could have consequences for generations to come.

Under this inadequate rule, the majority is giving us a meager 2 hours to hold this momentous debate. So I urge my colleagues to vote no on the rule and no on H.R. 2505.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, I yield 7 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WELDON), the sponsor of this bill.

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me time. I rise obviously to speak in support of this rule and in support of my underlying bill and in opposition to the substitute.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by just talking a little bit about the basic science of all of this. What is shown on this poster to my left is a normal fertilization of an egg. Normal human cells have 46 chromosomes; the egg has 23, the sperm has 23. When united, they become a fertilized egg, which then begins to differentiate into an embryo. Here is depicted a 3-day embryo and then a 7-day embryo.

Under the technique called somatic cell nuclear transfer, you take a cell from somebody's body. This could be a skin cell, depicted here. You extract the nucleus out, which is shown here. Then you take a female egg, a woman's egg. You remove the nucleus that was in there, which is shown here being discarded with the 23 chromosomes, so you have an enucleated egg. Then you implant that nucleus in there. This becomes a clone of the individual who donated this cell. From this point on, it begins to develop like a normal embryo.

Now, there will be some discussion today, I anticipate, where people will try to assert that this is not a human embryo; that this somehow is, and this is somehow not a human embryo.

I studied embryology in medical school. I am a physician. I practiced medicine for 15 years. Indeed, I brought my medical school embryology textbook, and I would defy anybody in this body to tell me what the science be-

hind making the assertion that this is not a human embryo. There is absolutely no basis in science to make such a claim.

This technique, which we are banning in humans, is how Dolly was created. They took a cell from the udder of a sheep; then they took a sheep's egg, removed the nucleus, took the nucleus out of this cell and put it in that egg depicted right there. Then it was put in tissue culture, where it became a more developed embryo, and then it was implanted in another sheep to create Dolly.

Now, to assert that a human embryo created by the somatic cell nuclear transfer technique is not a human embryo is like saying this was not a sheep embryo. Well, what is this? This is Dolly. To say that a human embryo created by nuclear transfer technology is not a human embryo to me is the equivalent of saying this is not a sheep.

Now, I have, I think, some pretty good quotes to support my position. This is from the Bioethics Advisory Commission. The Commission began its discussion fully recognizing that any efforts in humans to transfer somatic cell nucleus into an enucleated egg involves the creation of an embryo. So they support my argument. They have to, it is science, with the apparent potential to be implanted in a uterus and developed to term.

I have another quote from one of the Commissioners, Alex Capron. "Our cloning report, when read in light of subsequent developments in that field and of the stem cell report, supports completely halting attempts to create human embryos through SCNT," or somatic cell nuclear transfer, "at this time."

Now, I just want to point out, this is not a stem cell debate. There will be people who will try to make this a stem cell argument. My legislation does not make it illegal to do embryonic stem cell research.

I would also like to point out this is not an abortion debate. Judy Norsigian is shown here quoted, she is pro-choice, she is the co-author of "Our Bodies, Ourselves for the New Century" with the Boston Women's Health Collective. "There are other pro-choice groups that have supported my position that we do not want to go to this place, because embryo cloning will compromise women's health, turn their eggs and wombs into commodities, compromise their reproductive autonomy, with virtual certainty lead to the production of experimental human beings. We are convinced that the line must be drawn here."

Finally, I have a quote from the National Institutes of Health guidelines for research using human pluripotent stem cells. They deny Federal funding for research utilizing pluripotent stem cells that were derived from human embryos created for research purposes, research in which human pluripotent stem cells are derived using somatic cell nuclear transfer, the transfer of a